



## Servicemembers minister with needle, prayer



Photo by Pfc. Eric J. Martinez, 13th Public Affairs Detachment  
Lt. Col. Melinda Jackson, nurse practitioner and officer in charge, 547th Medical Company, Golby Clinic, and Staff Sgt. Lani Yearicks, band member, 10th Mountain Division, crochet prayer shawls Aug. 31 at the Mini-Chapel on Camp Victory.



Photo by Pfc. Eric J. Martinez, 13th PAD  
Spc. Cheryl Thomas, band member, 10th Mountain Division, knits a prayer shawl to send home to families of servicemembers who have died in Iraq. Prayer shawls can be made by either knitting or crocheting.

**Story by**  
**Pfc. Eric J. Glassey**  
*13th Public Affairs  
Detachment*

Prayer Shawls started in 1998 when two women, Janet Bristow and Victoria Galo, created a heart-felt ministry which combined compassion, the love of knitting/crocheting and prayer to reach out and comfort those dealing with hardship and tragedy. The Prayer Shawls movement has bloomed as a ministry to the depressed and down-trod-

den all across the United States over the past ten years.

At Camp Victory, a similar ministry has formed. A group of servicemembers work in their spare time to create shawls with a prayer in every stitch for those who have made the ultimate sacrifice.

"We send these shawls home to families of fallen comrades," said Staff Sgt. Lani Yearicks, band member, 10th Mountain Division. "They are not forgotten."

"The people who re-

ceive these are happy and grateful," said Lt. Col. Melinda Jackson, nurse practitioner and officer in charge, 547th Medical Company, Golby Clinic.

The reward is not just for those who receive but for those who give their time and energy making these shawls. For many, this isn't their first time in such a ministry.

"I am involved in a similar ministry back home in Puyallup, Washington," Jackson said. "I enjoy making things. It is a relaxing activity in

the area we live."

The first dedication service for sending out the prayer shawls will be Sunday at the 10th Mountain Division Honor Chapel.

Prayer Shawls is an open ministry for anyone who can or is interested in knitting or crocheting. Every Sunday at 1 p.m. in Building 24F, the mini-chapel, servicemembers come together to share ideas and fellowship as they continue to minister to those who need it the most.

## First human relations conference held

**Story by Pfc. Eric J. Glassey**  
13th Public Affairs Detachment

Equal opportunity representatives came from across Iraq to attend the 2008 Human Relations Conference at Al Faw Palace Aug. 28-29.

"This event was the first opportunity to cross-pollinate ideas, think about our craft in new ways and hear presentations by experts that deal with the human component," said Lt. Col. Lynn S. Jackson, equal opportunity program manager and sexual assault response coordinator, Multi-National Corps – Iraq.

The conference included presentations from the Criminal Investigative Division and subject matter experts from legal, the chaplain's office and behavioral health.

They worked on group projects to help share ideas and methodology on solving problems like sexual harassment and sexual assault. They also discussed healthy climates versus unhealthy climates in the military. These activities give equal opportunity personnel a better idea of how to brief this information to servicemembers, Jackson said.

"We want to get all the equal opportunity advisors and deployed sexual assault response coordinators to help make the program

better," said Master Sgt. Paul Pinkney, operations noncommissioned officer in charge, MNC-I. "We also want to help commanders get better information out."

The HR Conference helped representatives learn new tactics to disseminate knowledge to all personnel in their area of operation and to work with other EO advisors in their area.

"We are here to help the EO program be stronger, help commanders be more knowledgeable and empower these people," Pinkney said.



Photo by Marine Cpl. Frances Goch, MNC-I PAO  
The Human Relations Conference was opened by Master Sgt. Paul Pinkney, operations noncommissioned officer in charge, MNC-I, at Al Faw Palace Aug. 28.



Photo by Marine Cpl. Frances Goch, MNC-I PAO  
Servicemembers spent two days in the ballroom of the Al Faw Palace learning from each other and subject matter experts during the first Human Relations Conference in Iraq.



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## XVIII Airborne Corps activates new unit

Story and photos by  
Spc. Christopher M. Gaylord  
*13th Public Affairs Detachment*

Company B, Special Troops Battalion, XVIII Airborne Corps, was activated during a ceremony at the Joint Visitors Bureau Aug. 29.

The company will provide sustainment and intelligence support to Multi-National Corps – Iraq and Multi-National Force – Iraq, and consists of sections C1, C2, C4, C8 and the surgeon's cell.

The activation of Company B is a small part of a larger transformation the Corps is making to realign its staff.

"This is a provisional company that was stood up to be the intelligence and sustainment company, so this is just another milestone in that transformation," said Capt. Christian Robbins, who took command of Company B during the ceremony. "Basically, we're following the mold for the transformation of XVIII Airborne Corps, which will be August of 2009."

"We're getting it done in preparation for when we go back, so the teams are all in place going back," said Lt. Col. Bill Wanovich, commander, Special Troops Battalion, XVIII Abn. Corps. "It makes for a smoother transition."

First Sgt. Michael Canada, who previously served as the chief of inspections for the Corps Organizational Readiness Assessment Team, will be the company's senior noncommissioned officer.

The responsibility of Company B is an important one and will greatly



*Lt. Col. Bill Wanovich, commander, Special Troops Battalion, XVIII Airborne Corps, unfurls the Company B guidon with Capt. Christian Robbins Aug. 29 at the Joint Visitors Bureau, just moments before Robbins took command of the company.*

benefit the Corps' mission.

All across the companies being stood up, there are many missions they're accomplishing in support of Corps and Force, Wanovich said.

"[The company B Soldiers] do a tremendous job every day supporting the warfighter out there in the divisions and the brigades, and just providing the support that helps us fight our mission," Robbins said.

Commanding a unit will be a new experience for Robbins, but one he's greatly looking forward to.

"XVIII Airborne Corps' history dates back to World War Two, so it's got a lot of background, and since this is a new unit, just becoming a part of that background is great," Robbins said. "Being able to build the company basically from the ground up with First Sergeant Canada will be a tremendous and challenging opportunity, but we'll



*First Sgt. Michael Canada and his new Soldiers of Company B, Special Troops Battalion, XVIII Airborne Corps, stand in formation Aug. 29 just before the activation of the company at the Joint Visitors Bureau.*

do our best and we'll definitely make it happen."

"Leading Soldiers is a tremendous opportunity and I'm looking forward to it," Robbins said.

# Servicemembers “Read for the Record”



Maj. Brian Tribus, chief, media relations, Multi-National Corps – Iraq, reads *Corduroy* on video for his four children, Aug. 29., at the Mini-Chapel.

**Story and photo by  
Pfc. Eric J. Glassey**  
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One hundred-fifty books were requested by servicemembers from Victory Base Complex who are involved with Jumpstart's Read for the Record Campaign at the Multi-National Corps – Iraq Chaplain's Office at Camp Victory. The campaign's goal is to bring attention to the importance of early

education by encouraging children and adults to read this year's official campaign book, *Corduroy*.

The program works similar to the chaplain's United Through Reading program where an individual reads in front of a video camera and sends home the DVD and book to their child, younger sibling or any other family member or friend to watch and read along.

The Chaplain's Office will stop filming Reading for the Record videos by

Sept. 15, to ensure servicemembers have enough time to mail their recorded DVD and book home to their children and family members to watch on October 2.

"The book and the DVD are free," said Staff Sgt. Lesly Torres, noncommissioned officer in charge, MNC-I Chaplain's Office. "All you need to do is take a bit of your own time."

"I think it is a great program," said Pfc. Arverna Jackson, chaplain

assistant, Iraqi Assistant Group. "Your family can see you on video."

"The kids start jumping and they talk back to the TV," Torres said. "Most of them want you to read it again. The kids are so excited about it."

Appointments can still be made by contacting Torres at 822-5641 or Jackson at 822-7093. The MNC-I Chaplain's Office is at the Mini-Chapel, Building 24F, next to the Camp Victory bus stop.